

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-13

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 080389

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, GB, US

SUBJECT: UNSC DEBATE ON BENIN COMPLAINT

REF: LIBREVILLE 865

1. EMBASSY HAS SEEN USUN REPORTING ON BENIN DEBATE AND SUMMARIES OF STATEMENTS MADE BY AFRICAN DELEGATIONS. DEBATE IS CLEARLY BECOMING EMOTIONAL AND EMBARRASSING ISSUE FOR AFRICAN GROUP IN NEW YORK. FOCUS OF ACTION IS NOW AFRICAN GROUP WHERE BENINESE WILL PRESUMABLY HAVE TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT OF GABONESE AND OTHER AFRICANS FOR DRAFT RESOLUTION. THERE IS LITTLE AT PRESENT WHICH US CAN OR SHOULD DO TO INFLUENCE OUTCOME.

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2. IN THIS CONTEXT WE BELIEVE THAT YOU SHOULD RESPOND TO MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT BONGO ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:
(A) US HAS FOLLOWED BENIN DEBATE CAREFULLY. WHILE WE REGRET VIOLATION OF BENIN'S SOVEREIGNTY, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT AIRING OF THIS ISSUE IN SC CAN BE CONSTRUCTIVE AND WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THAT IT BE RESOLVED OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL.

(B) US IS SYMPATHETIC TO GABON'S DEEP CONCERNS THAT THE SC ACT FAIRLY AND NOT MAKE UNJUST ACCUSATIONS.

US DELEGATION WILL CONSULT WITH GABON DELEGATION IN NEW YORK AND OTHER SYMPATHETIC MEMBERS OF SC TO WORK AGAINST SUCH ACTION.

(C) WE NEVERTHELESS BELIEVE THAT MATTER AT THIS STAGE IS LARGELY IN THE HANDS OF THE AFRICAN GROUP. GABON AND ITS FRIENDS MUST WORK PRIMARILY WITHIN AF GROUP TO OBTAIN SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF BENINESE COMPLAINT. THERE IS LITTLE THAT US CAN DO TO INFLUENCE OUTCOME IN AF GROUP.

(D) IF MATTER COMES BEFORE FULL SC, WE WILL DO ALL WE CAN WITH OTHER LIKEMINDED SC MEMBERS TO ASSURE A FAIR AND JUST DECISION BY THE COUNCIL ON THE BENIN COMPLAINT. PRESIDENT BONGO SHOULD REST ASSURED THAT WE WILL NOT LEND OURSELVES TO UNFOUNDED CHARGES OR FINDINGS REGARDING GABON.

(E) WE WANT GABON TO KNOW THAT WE AND OTHER WESTERN MEMBERS OF SC ARE ALSO OPPOSED TO BLANKET DEMAND FOR GRANTING INTERNATIONAL COMPENSATION TO BENIN. WE BELIEVE THAT SUCH A DETERMINATION WOULD ESTABLISH BAD PRECEDENT IN COUNCIL AND LEAD TO FURTHER ABUSE OF UN SYSTEM FOR NARROW POLITICAL INTERESTS.

3. FYI ONLY. WE AND OTHER WESTERN MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL ARE ALSO SENSITIVE THAT GETTING DEEPLY INVOLVED IN BENIN DEBATE COULD HAVE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR JOINT EFFORTS TO ADOPT DECLARATION ON SOUTHERN AFRICA. CONFIDENTIAL

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END FYI.

4. FOR USUN. MISSION SHOULD DISCUSS POINTS PARA 2 WITH GABONESE DELEGATION IN NEW YORK AND INFORM OTHER WESTERN DELEGATIONS OF GABONESE CONCERNS. WHILE YOU SHOULD NOT MAKE ANY PARTICULAR VOTING COMMITMENT UNTIL WE SEE SPECIFIC DIRECTION DEBATE IS TAKING, YOU SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT GABON HAS BEEN SUPPORTIVE OF US ON KEY MULTI-LATERAL ISSUES IN THE PAST AND THIS IS RARE INSTANCE IN WHICH GABONESE HAVE APPROACHED US FOR HELP.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 09-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
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